

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are now pending in the application.

Claims 5, 16, and 26 are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1, 5, 11, 12, 14, 16, 23, and 26 are amended.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 6-8, 17, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries (U.S. Pat. No. 2,142,396). Claims 4 and 14-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries (U.S. Pat. No. 2,142,396) in view of Guinness (U.S. Pat. No. 1,789,899). Claims 1, 9, 10, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kimura (U.S. Pat. No. 5,605,014) in view of Humphries (U.S. Pat. No. 2,142,396). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

At the outset, applicants submit that the amendments to independent claims 1 and 11 render moot the section 103 rejections of claim 1 (and claims 2-4 and 6-10 depending therefrom) and claims 14, 15, 17, 21 and 22 (all of which depend from claim 11). Applicants further submit that the inventions set forth in the claims are patentably distinct over Humphries, Guinness, and Kimura for at least the reasons set forth below.

Independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to clarify that the turntable module is rotatable about a generally central longitudinal axis. But the cited patents do not disclose, teach or suggest at least these features of claims 1 and 11.

For example, Humphries does not disclose, teach or even remotely suggest a turntable module that is rotatable about a generally central longitudinal axis defined through the module. Instead, Humphries appears to disclose only a swinging door 15 having an edge hingedly connected 16 to a partition 14 such that the door 15 is opened or closed in a swinging or sweeping motion. See, for example, column 1, lines 24-25: "The invention further relates to an improved mounting means and hinge construction

for a door in a building construction whereby said door is allowed to swing through a wider angular range"; see column 1, lines 46-52: "The partition forms the innermost wall of the toilet and its outer end provides a support for the toilet door 15 which is mounted upon the edge of said partition by a special hinge construction 16 in order that said toilet door may swing through an angle of 270 degrees"; see column 2, lines 2-3:" when said toilet door is swung to the limited of its clockwise movement"; see column 2, line 38-42:" In Figs. 3 and 4 is shown the hinge mounting of the toilet door whereby said door is capacitated for swinging through three-quarters of a circumference as illustrated in Fig. 1"; and see column 3, lines 11-12:"The toilet door 15 is swingable inwardly".

Furthermore, the Humphries swinging door 15 is used to connect exterior compartments with an original compartment. In various embodiments of the present invention, however, a turntable module can be used to increase the useable space but which can also be rotatable within the footprint of the originally sized compartment.

In addition, the Humphries swinging door concept will not work on an airplane, that is, without making virtually impossible modifications to the airplane's interior configuration. This is due at least in part because airplane interiors are required to abide by an entirely different set of government regulations than are building interiors. For example, the Humphries swinging door concept will not work specifically at an airplanes doorway egress because the Humphreys door 15 requires such a relatively large sweep area in order to swing open and close such that the Humphreys door would significantly encroach or intrude into the adjacent doorway egress.

In addition, the lavatory walls on the outboard side of an airplane are curved to match the curvature of the fuselage. Because of this fuselage curvature, however, close out would not be possible for the Humphries swinging door concept at doorway egress locations. The economic realities and complexity of incorporating the Humphries swinging door into an aircraft interior militate strongly against any finding of obviousness.

In regard to Kimura, Kimura describes a rotatable bathroom stall door 6 and a sink 22. But the sink 22 is not supported by the door 6. Instead, the Kimura sink 22 is fixed to the floor and remains within the restroom at all times regardless of the door's position.

Further, the cited patents also fail to recognize the advantages that can be realized by using a turntable module of the present invention. For example, in the aircraft context, a turntable module of the present invention can allow the emergency space required by the FAA during taxi, takeoff and landing to be converted into useable space during cruise, thereby increasing useable space within aircraft lavatories without reducing revenue generating spaces.

Because the cited patents do not at least disclose, teach or suggest a turntable module rotatable about a generally central longitudinal axis, claims 1 and 11 are not rendered obvious by Humphries and the other cited patents. For at least the above reasons, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the section 103 rejections of claims 1 and 11.

With regard to dependent claims 2-4, 6-10, 14, 15, 17, 21, and 22, these claims each depend from a claim shown above to be allowable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-4, 6-10, 14, 15, 17, 21, and 22 are also allowable for allowance for at least the reasons given above in connection with the independent claim from which it depends.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 11-13, 18, 19, 20, 23-25, and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Humphries (U.S. Pat. No. 2,142,396). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 11 and 23 have been amended to clarify that the turntable module is rotatable about a generally central longitudinal axis. These amendments render moot the section 102 rejections of claim 11 (and claims 12, 13, and 18-20 depending therefrom) and claim 23 (and claims 24, 25, and 27 depending therefrom).

Applicants further submit that the inventions set forth in the claims are not anticipated by Humphries because Humphries does not disclose each and every feature of claim 11 or claim 23. For example, and as noted above in more detail, Humphries does not disclose a turntable module that is rotatable about a generally central longitudinal axis. Instead, Humphries appears to disclose only a swinging door 15

having an edge hingedly connected 16 to a partition 14 such that the door 15 is opened or closed in a swinging or sweeping motion.

Because Humphreys does not disclose a turntable module that is rotatable about a generally central longitudinal axis, applicants respectfully submit that Humphreys does not anticipate claims 11 and 23. For at least the above reasons, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 102 rejections of claims 11 and 23.

With regard to dependent claims 12, 13, 18-20, 24, 25, and 27, these claims each depend from a claim shown above to be allowable. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that claims 12, 13, 18-20, 24, 25, and 27 are also allowable for at least the reasons given above in connection with the independent claim from which it depends.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Office Action states that claims 5, 16, and 26 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants have rewritten claims 5, 16 and 26 in independent form. Therefore, claims 5, 16, and 26 should now be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

Applicants believe that the appropriate fees are included herewith. However, the Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees or to credit any overpayments thereto.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7502.

Respectfully submitted,

By


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